



Department of Justice

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FRANKLIN COUNTY MAN IS SENTENCED ON FEDERAL CHILD PORNOGRAPHY CHARGES

ST. LOUIS, MO - Matthew F. McWilliams, Washington, Missouri was sentenced to morning to 40 months in prison, and fined \$12,500, on charges of possessing child pornography, United States Attorney Catherine L. Hanaway, Franklin County Sheriff Gary Toelke and Greene County Sheriff Jack Merritt announced today.

"People who victimize our most innocent citizens deserve the most severe punishment possible. One of the goals of the U.S. Attorney's Office is to protect those who cannot protect themselves," said Hanaway. With the help of our law enforcement partners, such as Sheriff Toelke, Sheriff Merritt and the FBI, we will continue to aggressively pursue these cases to do just that."

McWilliams, 54, 500 block of Country View Lane, Washington, Missouri, pled guilty last September to one felony count of possession of child pornography. On March 30, 2005, McWilliams had numerous images of child pornography; children under of the age of eighteen engaged in sexually explicit conduct, on his computer. These images were sent and received over the internet.

This case is being brought as part of Project Safe Childhood. In February 2006, Attorney General Alberto R. Gonzales created Project Safe Childhood, a nationwide initiative designed to protect children from online exploitation and abuse. Led by the United States Attorneys Offices, Project Safe Childhood marshals federal, state and local resources to better locate, apprehend, and prosecute individuals who exploit children via the Internet, as well as identify and rescue victims. For more information about Project Safe Childhood, please visit www.projectsafechildhood.gov/.

In addition to Sheriff's Toelke and Merritt, Hanaway commended the work on the case by the Federal Bureau of Investigation, the Missouri Internet Crimes Against Children Task Force, the Regional Computer Crimes Education and Enforcement Group, and Assistant United States Attorney Hal Goldsmith, who handled the case for the U.S. Attorney's Office.

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